

GOVERNING

THE STATES AND LOCALITIES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 21, 2005

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Teri Takai, Michigan's chief information officer who created a new model for IT leadership, is among the winners of **Governing** Magazine's Public Official of the Year Awards for 2005.

The winners also include the governor of Arkansas, the mayor of Denver, New York City's health director, a Florida state senator, Louisiana's commissioner of administration, the executive of Nassau County, New York and the superintendent of Boston public schools.

"All of these people faced enormous challenges when they entered office," said Alan Ehrenhalt, **Governing**'s executive editor. "They confronted fiscal emergencies and public health crises, interest group rivalry and institutional breakdown. In each case, our winners solved their most pressing problems and accomplished what might not have seemed possible a few years earlier. Their bold leadership and innovative policies should serve as models for officials nationwide."

This year's group of recipients is the twelfth to be honored in **Governing**'s annual awards program, which was launched in 1994. **Governing**, now 18 years old, is an independent national magazine devoted to coverage of state and local government. It has a circulation of 85,000.

Governing 's 2005 Public Officials of the Year:

Teri Takai, Michigan's chief information officer, integrated information technology planning into all of her government's core goals, thereby creating a national model for silo-busting IT leadership and saving the state \$100 million.

Arkansas Governor **Mike Huckabee** proved himself to be a national leader on health care policy who practices what he preaches by providing coverage to 200,000 children and by losing more than 100 pounds when he was diagnosed with diabetes.

Denver Mayor **John W. Hickenlooper** persuaded voters to approve a comprehensive new metropolitan transit system by galvanizing a broad coalition of local governments and business leaders to support a ballot initiative.

Thomas Frieden, commissioner of New York City's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, reduced the number of smokers in his city by 200,000 through a combination of tough anti-smoking legislation and assistance for people trying to quit.

Florida state Senator **Paula Dockery** created a consensus among historically antagonistic interest groups to win passage of landmark water-use legislation.

Jerry Luke LeBlanc, Louisiana's Commissioner of Administration, reformed his state's appropriations process and fought against an inefficient bureaucratic culture by instituting performance-based budgeting.

County Executive **Thomas R. Suozzi** of Nassau County, New York, took a government that was nearly \$3 billion in debt and put it back on solid financial footing, balancing every budget and earning improved bond ratings.

Boston Superintendent of Schools **Thomas W. Payzant** produced enviable improvements in student performance through a back-to-basics approach and a focus on more effective teacher training.

The award winners are profiled in the November issue of **Governing** and will be honored at a dinner November 9 in Washington, DC, hosted by the magazine and by the corporate sponsors of the awards: **Northrop Grumman IT, CGI-AMS, HP, Siemens Corporation and Unisys.**